

Human Resources Division Recognition Awards Program

By: Whilemenia Duncan, Communication Specialist
Office of the Director

Lights, Camera, Action! Suspense filled the air as the Human Resources Division gathered to honor their best and brightest “star” employees on March 18, 2010. Amidst flashing cameras and paparazzi, the staff of the Washington, D.C. and Kansas City offices assembled to recognize fellow employees’ past accomplishments and to mark the beginning of “The New HRD, where our customers experience our value every day.” Attendees celebrated while surrounded by a Hollywood “Wall of Fame” containing gold stars listing the names of the HRD employees. Stephanie Sybil Brown, SHRM, Benefits and Performance Management Section Chief, played the Mistress of Ceremonies for the event. HRD Branch Chiefs opened the envelopes to reveal the winners and present each “star” employee an “Oscar” certificate for their accomplishments.



Each of the five award categories reflected a core value of the new Human Resources Division. The HRD Leadership Team nominated the winners for their initiative and actions that contributed significantly to the success of HRD during the period of October, 2009 to March, 2010. The five awards categories were:

- Leadership – for initiating positive change through vision/values including programs and practices.
- Customer Service – for exceeding either internal or external client expectations by providing outstanding service/delivery of program and/or transactional support.
- Quality Assurance – for developing methods that reduced errors, saved money, or reduced client complaints with value added solutions or initiated action to develop quality products producing high quality output.
- Team Work – for participating in special teams or work groups that produced outstanding service/team work across functional areas or for demonstrating targeted inclusion of traditionally under represented staff on project matters within a discipline.
- Making A Difference – for displaying significant work, product, or special projects that produced a clear “above and beyond” impact or effort to assist clients.

The event also commemorated the launching of the newly transformed Human Resources Division. Organizational structures and workloads have been realigned to better serve the needs of the FFAS customers. LeMont Neal, Associate HRD Director, spoke to the employees about overcoming the fear of change concerning the upcoming transformation and the importance of each individual employee’s contribution to the new HRD. After the awards were distributed, Jackie Whitaker, HRD Director, distributed “Empower” cards that authorized all employees to take positive action to serve our customers. On the card was the division’s new motto “The New HRD where our customers experience our value every day.”

Human Resources Division Recognition Awards Program (continued)

Besides the certificate, winners also received the envelope that contained a description of the specific action or accomplishment submitted for the award. And the winners were:

➤ **Leadership Award**

•Latrisha Peterson

➤ **Customer Service Award**

•Carleen Dempsey •Velerie Eddleman •Ernie Kary •Gail Nichols
•Loretta Ramey •Debbie Rogers •Irene Seastrum •LaShawn Smith
•Karen Williams

➤ **Quality Assurance Award**

•Latoya Akintewe

➤ **Team Work Award**

•Arlene Bailey •Velerie Eddleman •Marie Hubbard •Brian Marincic
•Mark Nelson •Tammi Parrott •Bessy Plaza •Cindy Witmer

➤ **Making a Difference Award**

•Cynthia Fallin •Tatjana Fernandez •Lisa Flores •Jonathan Leaman
•Susan Nedelco •Olga Torres •Shari Welker •Rande Young

This event was the first in a series of quarterly events that will be held between the Washington, D.C. and Kansas City Human Resources Division offices. Employees were able to provide feedback about the celebration in a follow-up survey that will be used by the Leadership Team to enhance succeeding programs. These sessions are one of the first steps being taken by HRD to improve employee engagement as part of the cultural transformation occurring at USDA.